



***From the Mayor's Desk***

**April, 2022**

In recent years, we have made some changes to the local landscape. In places such as Technology Park and the Town Center, we've activated spaces, better enabling people to connect around music, culture and exercise. As we continue to invest in city infrastructure, we are seeing a strong interest in retail and office property in the city.

Holder Properties, a residential real estate development and investment company, recently purchased two class "A" office buildings on Davinci Court. The director of leasing, Billy Cooke, said, "You can literally walk outside of our door, get on the new walking trail, get to the Forum or get to the new retail across the street."

The city is currently expanding its multi-use trail at the Town Center. A new section is under construction in a wooded area adjacent to Cinebistro. It will provide a nice place for people to walk, and it connects to the pedestrian bridge over Peachtree Parkway to the Forum shopping center. This leads me to the other big investment made recently.

North American Properties recently purchased the Forum shopping center and company executives say they are planning to make some improvements to the 22-year-old center to increase activity. The purchase was a "win-win" for both North American Properties and the City. With the Town center located across the street, there are opportunities for collaboration.

North American Properties has had a great deal of success with the Avalon development in Alpharetta. The company sees a lot of potential in the Forum and plans to make some investment that not only improves the aesthetics, but also promotes the interaction of people. As a place becomes more active, commerce responds, giving people more reason to be there. Increased pedestrian traffic means more prospective customers to support the businesses.

Mr. Cooke said they wanted to feed off what was already here, and what is planned. He was referring to the Town Center, the Forum, the trail system and an attractive office market, among other things.

The city has installed sidewalks, trails and mulch paths around the city. The 10-foot wide sidewalks in Technology Park, in particular, get a lot of use. We are continuing to plan and construct other sections of multi-use trail system around the city. One day, there will be a loop, approximately 11 miles, around the city. Residential areas will be able to access Tech Park and retail areas without having to get into an automobile and get on the road. That is our objective.

People see the investments being made, benefitting people now and in the future, and naturally they want to be close to that activity. We will continue our efforts to maintain the city's vibrancy and economic conditions and sustain a place where people feel a sense of ownership and are proud to call home.

**Stay safe, Mike Mason, Mayor**